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RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 3272
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4644
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0530
RUEHNEC/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY 2829
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1291
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2125
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 003064

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [PINR](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: NEW OHCHR HEAD NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PEACE

REF: A. KATHMANDU 2971

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 3022
[1](#)C. KATHMANDU 3063

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) On November 17, Lena Sundh, the new Swedish head of the Nepal Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), told the Ambassador that impunity remained a big problem on both sides of the conflict in Nepal -- for both the security forces and the Maoists. Sundh stated that she was not optimistic about the prospects for peace in Nepal, and compared the situation here with her own experiences in Angola, where the United Nations, in her opinion, had not played an effective role. Sundh worried about the increased Maoist recruitment of child soldiers. She was concerned that the UN did not have a clear mandate for monitoring Maoist weapons, and feared that the Maoists were using the peace process to gain strength. She did however, express some hope that the UN could have a more active role if they had a clear mandate.

Army and Maoists Must Own Up To Past Abuses

[1](#)2. (C) In a November 17 meeting with the Ambassador, Lena Sundh, the new Swedish head of OHCHR in Nepal, stated that the Nepal Army (NA) seemed to be getting better at addressing current abuses, such as the July attack by Army officers on a police post (ref A), but it still refused to take responsibility to punish past abuses. The Ambassador told Sundh that the Embassy shared these concerns and continued to raise them at the highest levels of the Government of Nepal (GON), in the NA, and the Ministry of Defense (ref B). Sundh hoped that the Maoists would also take responsibility for their past and present actions, including continuing extortion across the country.

Comprehensive Peace Agreement: Removing Human Rights Language?

[1](#)3. (C) Sundh said that she had heard that the Maoists wanted

to remove much of the human rights language from the draft of the comprehensive peace accord before signing it, and that this was one of the issues that had forced the Government and the Maoists to put off signing the accord on November 16 (ref C). Sundh stated that removing the language was not necessarily bad, as much of what had been written did not need to be in the accord. Sundh told the Ambassador that the Maoists had said that the language was "too repetitive" and needed to be shortened. Sundh's concern was that there be a statement in the agreement that "respect for human rights is important during the peace process." Sundh hoped that such a statement would be included, and the Ambassador agreed.

Children Must Not Be Recruited -- Or Counted

14. (C) Sundh told the Ambassador that it was important that it be made clear that recruitment of children by the Maoists was unacceptable and must be stopped. Sundh stated that Ian Martin's UN peace team needed to tell the Maoists that they would not count children put into cantonments; that only adult combatants would be counted in the final tally. (Note: According to press reports, Ian Martin passed a message along these lines to Maoist Supremo Prachanda. End Note.) Sundh also mentioned that UNICEF would not provide assistance or food to child soldiers in cantonments. Sundh feared the Maoists were not thinking about this. She compared the increased recruiting to the situation she had seen in Angola, where only four percent of the people put into cantonments under UN supervision had actually been soldiers; the others were new recruits added to bulk up the numbers.

Need Robust Monitoring Of Weapons

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15. (C) Sundh said that the UN Mission in Nepal could do better than it is doing if it had a stronger mandate. She said that the UN Secretary General had already promised 100 monitors to Nepal. The Ambassador asked Sundh how, without a Security Council Resolution, these monitors would be funded and under what authority they would work. Sundh did not respond. The Ambassador worried that with 28 total camps, 100 monitors would not even begin to be able to enforce the agreements between the Government and the Maoists. Sundh agreed, but was hopeful that more monitors would come.

Bio Note on Lena Sundh

16. (C) Lena Sundh took over as head of the OHCHR office in Kathmandu on October 18, 2006, and arrived in Kathmandu on November 13, 2006. Sundh joined the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1976 and served in Thailand, Namibia, Morocco, and at the UN in Geneva and New York. She was Ambassador of Sweden to Angola from 1995-2000. She also served as the Director at the Departments of African Affairs and of Global Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sweden. Within the UN, Sundh served with UNHCR in Cambodia and was a member of the UN Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions. Sundh served as the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of Congo, and was the Deputy Head of the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Congo. Her English is excellent.

Comment

17. (C) The new director of OHCHR seems realistic in her view of the pitfalls inherent in the current peace process and on the need for separation of the Maoists from their weapons. Her past experience in conflict zones will serve her well in her role of monitoring and bringing to light serious human rights abuses in Nepal. The sooner UN monitors are on the ground to oversee the containment of bona fide People's

Liberation Army fighters in camps and their separation from
their weapons, the better prospect for Nepal's peace process.
MORIARTY